

MINUTES

OF THE

TWENTIETH ANNUAL SESSION

OF THE

HARMONY BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,

HELD WITH THE

NEW HOPE CHURCH, BIBB COUNTY, ALA.,

*From the 10th to the 13th of October, 1896.*

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R. H. BLAKE, -

MODERATOR,  
New Mars.

J. N. HAYES,

CLERK,  
Tuscaloosa.

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The next session will meet with the Valley Creek Church, on  
Saturday before the second Sabbath in October, 1897.

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COMMITTEES TO REPORT AT OUR NEXT SESSION.

Temperance—J. A. MARKHAM, Chairman, Belle Sumpter, Ala.

Sabbath Schools—W. P. KEETON, Chairman, Woodstck, Ala.

S. H. & F. Missions—J. A. MARKHAM, Belle Sumpter, Ala.

Education—T. EDMONDS, Chairman, Blocton, Ala.

Orphan's Home—J. C. McELROY, Chairman, Blocton, Ala.

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Burton & Weatherford, Printers, Tuscaloosa, Ala.



## MINUTES.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10, 1896.

1. The Delegates from the various Churches composing the Twentieth Annual Session of Harmony Baptist Association convened with the New Hope Church this day at 11 o'clock. The Introductory Sermon was preached by Elder R. M. Blake, from John 13:34—"A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." After a recess of one hour, during which a most ample dinner was served, the Delegates assembled in the meeting-house, and the Association was called to order by our former Moderator, Rev. R. H. Blake.

2. Opened the door for the reception of new or unassociated churches, when Bro. A. J. Fleming came forward with a letter from Corinth church, and by motion was received into the Association.

3. The roll of the Churches was called and the Delegates came forward with their letters and voted for Moderator, which resulted in the choice of Rev. R. H. Blake.

4. The Moderator proceeded with the business as follows, and appointed the following Committees to serve during the present session, except the Committees on Temperance, S. H. and F. Missions, Sabbath Schools, Education, and Orphan's Home, who report at our next session: Preaching—B. H. Mathews, W. R. Smith, E. A. F. Herring, with the Deacons of this Church.

Finance—T. G. Caffee, I. Griffin, D. Morrison.

Documents—J. C. McElroy, Gordon Parsons, G. W. Smith, A. J. Fleming

Deceased Ministers—John N. Hayes, A. J. Fleming, J. Morrison.

Aged and Infirm Ministers—D. George, L. W. Nelson, J. C. McElroy.

Nominations—W. H. Lawson, D. George, John N. Hayes.

Temperance—J. A. Markham, W. H. Lawson, E. L. Patrick.

S. H. and F. Missions—J. A. Markham, B. M. Tatum, S. Y. Herring.

Education—T. Edmonds, John Tatum, A. B. Dickey.

Orphans' Home—J. C. McElroy, W. B. Perry, O. M. Parsons.

Sabbath Schools—W. P. Keeton, D. M. Burgen, F. B. Patrick.

5. Called for correspondence: Tuscaloosa, Rev. J. H. Myze and James Osborn; Shelby, I. N. Walker.

6. The Committee on Preaching reported: Preaching to-night at the saw mill by Rev. J. H. Myze; prayer-meeting Sunday morning at half past 8 o'clock, conducted by Bro. J. C. McElroy.

The Association then adjourned to 9 o'clock Monday morning.

Prayer by Bro. I. N. Walker.

SABBATH, OCTOBER 11th.

7. The appointments as announced by the Committee on Preaching were attended to as follows: Elder J. A. Markham preached a missionary sermon at 11 o'clock, from Luke 25:15—"And it came to pass that while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew

near and went with them." After which, a collection was taken up to the amount of \$1.71 for Missions and \$1.71 for Orphan's Home.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 12th.

8. Pursuant to adjournment, the Association met and was opened with prayer by Rev. J. H. Myze.

LIST OF CHURCHES AND DELEGATES (MINISTERS IN SMALL CAPITALS)

Blue Creek—J. A. MARKHAM, J. R. Sellars.

Corinth—A. J. Fleming.

Cedar Grove—John N. Hayes, H. B. Mathews, D. George.

Center Grove—W.B Perry, R.R. McCully, S.B. Champion, D W. Moore, Geo. Smith.

Enterprise—Not Represented.

Hephzibah—S. Y. Herring.

Liberty—E. A. F. Herring, E. L. Patrick.

Mt. Carmel—J. M. Morrison, D. L. Morrison, T. Edmonds, J. W. Smith, J. C. Mc-

Elroy. I. Griffin, J. M. Fitts, Jack Cook, L. W. Nelson.

Mount Olive—J. N. Hayes.

New Hope—J. H. Tatum, J. H. Mayer, F. B. Patrick, B. M. Tatum, H. F. Oglesby.

Pleasant Grove—W. H. Lawson, Pink Herring.

Parker Grove—R. H. BLAKE, C. A. Blake.

Pleasant Valley—Not Represented.

Roup's Valley—O. L. Burgin, T. G. Caffee.

Valley Creek—Gordon Parsons, O. M. Parsons.

9. The Committee on Temperance reported :—

THE STREET OF HELL.—There are in the United States about 180,000 liquor stores. If formed into a street with a row of saloons on each side, allowing only 25 feet to each one, they would make a street about 126 miles long. Let us imagine the saloons brought together into such a street, and let us suppose that the moderate drinkers and their families are marching into it at the upper end, come with me, if you have the nerve and patience, and we will stand at the lower end of that street and see what comes out of it in one year. What army is this that comes marching along in solid column, five abreast and extending 800 miles? It is the army of 7,000,000 men and women who daily enter these saloons for intoxicating drinks—marching twenty miles a day, it will take them forty days to pass us. At last they are gone, but out of their ranks has dropped and fallen to the rear another army marching five abreast and 85 miles in length. In it are 500,000 drunkards. They are men and women who have lost control of their appetites, and who more or less get drunk and make beasts of themselves. Scan them closely as they go by. There are gray haired men and fair haired boys among them. There are also many women in that army sunk to deeper depths than the men, because of the greater heights from which they fell. The trembling limbs, the palsied hands, the untimely appearance, the bloated faces, the bloodshot eyes. The march is with unsteady steps and is 319 309 lines, and it will take them nearly a week to go by. It is a sad and sickening sight. But do not go away yet, for here comes another army, 125,000 criminals. From jails and prisons and penitentiaries they come. At the head of this army is a long line of persons whose hands are smeared with human blood. With ropes around their necks, they are on their way to the gallows. Others are going to prison for life. Every crime known to our laws has been committed by these persons while they were under the influence of drink. But, hark! whence come those unearthly yells, and who are those bound with strong chains and guarded by strong men, that go raging by? They are raving maniacs, made such by strong drink. Their eyes are tormented

by awful sights, and their ears ring with horrid sounds. Slimy reptiles climb over their bodies and fiends torment them before their time; to all intents and purposes, they are already in hell. They are gone now, and we breathe more freely. But, what gloom is this that pervades the air, and what is that long line of black coming slowly down the street? It is the line of funeral processions, 100,000 who have died from alcohol are being carried to their graves. Drunkards do not have many friends to grieve their loss, and we can put thirty of their funeral processions into a mile. We thus have a procession 3,333 miles long. It will take a good share of the year for it to go by, for funeral processions move slowly; yes, most of them do, but every now and then an uncoffined corpse in a rough cart is driven rapidly by, and we hear the brutal driver sing: "Quick, rattle his bones over the stones; he's only a pauper whom nobody owns." Look into the coffins as they go by. See the dead drunkards. Some died of delirium tremens, and the lines of terror are still plainly marked on their faces. Some froze to death by the roadside, too drunk to reach their homes. Some stumbled from the wharf and were drowned. Some wandered into the woods and died, and their bodies rotted on the surface of the earth. Some blew their own brains out, and some were fearfully stabbed in drunken brawls. Some were roasted in burning buildings. Some were crushed to shapeless masses under the cars. They died in various ways, but strong drink killed them all, and their tombstones, if they ever have any, may be fitly inscribed: "He died a drunkard's death." Close behind them comes another long line of funeral processions, we know not how many, but they are more numerous attended by mourning friends. They are the funeral processions of those who have met death through the carelessness and cruelty of drunken men. Some died of broken hearts, some were foully murdered, some were burned to death in buildings set on fire by drunken men, some were terribly mangled on the road on account of drunken engineers or flagmen, some were blown up on a steamboat because a drunken captain ran a race with a rival boat. But here comes another army, an army of children, innocent ones, upon whom has been visited the iniquities of their fathers. How many are there? 500,000—marching two abreast they extend up the street 75 miles. Each one must bear through life the stigma of being a drunkard's child. They are reduced to poverty, want, and beggary. They in ignorance are familiar with vice. Keep back your tears now, if you can, and look at them. See their gaunt figures and bony hands; see their sad uplifted faces, from which all traces of childish joy has been crushed out; some are moaning with hunger, and some are shivering with cold, for they have not rags enough to keep them warm; many of them are idiots, made so before they were born by brutal drunken fathers; and, worse than all the rest, many of them have inherited a love for liquor and are growing up to take the places and do the deeds of their fathers. They will fill up the ranks of the awful army of drunkards that moves in unbroken column down to death. It has taken a full year for the street to empty itself of its year's work. And close in the rear comes the vanguard of next year's supply; and if this is what strong drink does in our land in one year, what must be the sum total of its awful results in all the world through the long centuries! Thus far we have listened to the story that the figures tell; but they cannot tell all. They give only the faint outlines of the terrible tragedy that is going on around us. They cannot picture to us the wretched squalor of a drunkard's home. They cannot tell us how many unkind and cruel words strong drink has caused husbands and fathers to utter to their dear ones. They cannot tell us how many heavy blows have fallen from the drunkard's hand upon those whom it is his duty to love, cherish and protect. They cannot tell us how many fond expectations and bright hopes which the fair young bride had of the future, has been blasted and turned to bitterest gall. They cannot remember



the long weary hours of the night during which she has anxiously awaited, and yet fearfully dreaded, the heavy footfall at the door. Figures cannot tell us how many scalding tears the wives of drunkards have shed, nor how many prayers of bitter anguish and cries of agony God has heard them utter. They cannot tell us how many mothers have worn out body and soul in providing the necessities of life for children whom a drunken father has left destitute. They cannot tell us how many mothers' hearts have broken with grief as they saw a darling son becoming a drunkard. They cannot tell us how many white hairs have gone down in sorrow to the grave mourning over drunken children. They cannot tell us how many hard-fought battles the drunkard in his sober moments has fought with the terrible appetite; how many times he has walked his room in despair, tempted to commit suicide because he felt that he could not conquer the demand; and finally we cannot search the records of the other world to tell how many souls have been shut out from that holy place where no drunkard enters, and banished to the regions of eternal despair by the demand of drink. What man, what woman, what child, would not vote to have that whole street, with its awful traffic in the infernal stuff, sunk to the lowest depths of perdition, and covered ten thousand fathoms deep under the curses of the universe? Will we, as brethren and delegates, abstain from using intoxicating liquors as a beverage, and set an example before the world?

Respectfully submitted, J. A. MARKHAM, Chairman.

10. The Committee on Deceased Ministers reported:—

We find that there has been no ministers deceased since our last meeting.

JOHN N. HAYES, Chairman.

11. The Committee on Finance reported:—

For Foreign Missions, \$1.26; State Missions, \$1.00; Home Missions, \$2.40; Collection for Foreign Missions, \$1.71; Collection for Orphan's Home, \$1.71; Mount Carmel Church sent to Orphan's Home, \$3.90; Collection for Elder N. H. Williams, \$2.56; For Minutes, \$12.79; For Association Purposes, \$8.84; Total, \$28.49.

T. G. CAFFEY, Chairman.

The Association adjourned one hour for dinner.

12. At 1 p. m., the Association met and was opened with prayer by Rev. J. A. Markham.

13. The Com. on State, Home, and Foreign Missions reported:—

We call your attention to the work done by the State Board of Missions. It has organized churches in every part of the State, and helped to build houses of worship. The promise of God to all the families of the earth is in exact keeping with the terms and scope of the great commission, "Go ye into the world and preach the gospel to every creature." Brethren, let us give of our means, that we may aid in this great and grand work.

J. W. SMITH, Chairman.

14. The Committee on Aged and Infirm Ministers reported:—

We find one—Rev. N. H. Williams. We recommend that a collection be taken up for him. (Which was done, and amounted to \$2.59.) D. GEORGE, Ch'm.

The Association adjourned to 9 a.m. tomorrow. Prayer by Rev. I. N. Walker.

15. Tuesday, October 13th—Pursuant to adjournment, the Association met and was opened with prayer by Bro. James Osborn.

16. The Committee on Documents reported:—

We find nothing of special importance, except that some of our churches fail to show any Sabbath Schools; also, value of property is almost ignored, and cannot be reported by us. As literature for schools, we would recommend Kind Words,

by the Baptist Publication Society, of Philadelphia, Penn. We would urge at the next session full statistics of all expenditures, including value of property, Sabbath School officers, teachers and pupils attending. J. C. McELROY, Ch'm.

By motion, the Association appointed a committee of three to see after the interest of Sabbath School work in the bounds of the Association, and if they think best to appoint an evangelist to travel and work in the interest of such schools. Committee: Rev. R. H. Blake, Geo. Dunn and John N. Hayes.

17. The Committee on Education Reported :—

We are living in a progressive age, surrounded by competition of various kinds, and those of us who go forth to battle for a livelihood, from a secular as well as a spiritual standpoint, unprepared, must necessarily be at the mercy of others, and occupy only a low and servile position. The Giver of every good and perfect gift has blessed us with offspring which it is our bounden and christian duty to properly equip for the obligations of life. While volumes may be written on this subject from various standpoints, we take it that the subject is to be discussed here strictly from a religious standpoint. No well informed person can doubt for a moment that Baptist ministers are too poorly educated. Let us awake, my brethren, from our sleep of lethargy and indifference in regard to the education of our preachers, and resolve that at no distant day our pastors shall occupy the Baptist position in the scale of education. Fill your reading rooms with all kinds of religious literature, in order that your children may imbibe proper instruction and receive pure, virtuous and noble impressions while their minds are tender and susceptible, in order to be a perfect man and thoroughly developed christian. Let us not fail to educate the heart, as well as the brain. JOHN N. HAYES, Ch'm.

18. The Committee on Nominations reported :—

We recommend the next session to be held with the Valley Creek church, on Saturday before the second Sabbath in October, 1897, four miles northeast of Adger, in Jefferson county, Ala., Elder J. A. Markham to preach the introductory sermon, Elder R. H. Blake to preach the missionary sermon, on Sunday at 11 o'clock.

W. H. LAWSON, Chairman.

19. The Committee on Sabbath Schools reported :—

We find some of our churches have good Sabbath Schools and show a prosperous condition, while others have reported none. A large number of our children are not in Sabbath School. We urge upon christians the importance of taking more interest in teaching their children the Word of God and the way of eternal life. This is a duty incumbent upon every one, and they must not neglect it, knowing that the welfare of their children depends upon their works, and we recommend that the churches within the bounds of our Association have a fifth Sunday Sabbath School Mass Meeting to discuss questions of interest to the Sabbath School work, hoping thereby to establish schools in all of our churches, and that their meetings be held regularly at different churches every fifth Sunday.

T. G. CAFFEE, Chairman.

20. Minutes of the District Meeting held with Center Grove Church September 18th and 19th, 1896. The introductory sermon was preached by Rev. R. H. Blake, from Matthew 18:28. Adjourned one hour for dinner. At 1 o'clock the delegates assembled in the meeting house and were called to order by Rev. R. H. Blake. The roll was called, and the delegates came forward bearing their respective letters and voted for moderator and clerk, which resulted in the choice of Rev. R. H. Blake moderator and John N. Hayes clerk. By request, Bros. J. H. Mayes and R. R. McCully read the letters. The Moderator appointed the following commit-

tees: On Arrangements—Bros. J. W. Smith, J. H. Mayes, R. R. McCully, with the Deacons of this church. On Nominations and Queries—T. N. Wagoner, A. J. Reach, John Seals, R. Russell. Took up the query for this evening: "What was originally the work of the district meeting?" After considerable discussion, it was decided that it was for the advancement of the Cause of Christ and the building up of His Kingdom. By motion, adjourned to 9 o'clock to-morrow morning. September 19, met in prayer and experience meeting, conducted by Bro. Mayes until preaching hour. Rev. R. H. Blake preached at 11 o'clock. Adjourned one hour for dinner. Evening Session. The Committee on Nominations reported:—We recommend that the next session of this body meet with Mt. Carmel Church, on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1897. Queries for discussion: Friday evening—Is an organ or other musical instrument a Scriptural way of worship? Opened by Bro. J. W. Smith. For Saturday morning—What is the best method of raising money for church purposes? Opened by Bro. D. H. Lewis. Saturday evening—What is the best method for working up spiritual interest in the churches. Opened by Brother J. N. Blake. Rev. J. A. Markham to preach the introductory sermon. The delegates sang a hymn and gave each other the parting hand. Adjourned to meet with the Mt. Carmel Church, on Friday before the first Sabbath in September, 1897.

21. Resolved, That this Association return its hearty thanks to the members of New Hope Church, and the citizens of the neighborhood and vicinity, for their hearty welcome to us and their kind entertainment during our stay with them. May the rich blessings of our God rest upon them, and may the labors of our meeting with them be blessed with an abundant harvest, for Christ's sake.

After singing and taking the parting hand, the Association adjourned, to meet with Valley Creek Church, commencing on Saturday before the second Sabbath in October, 1897, four miles northeast of Adger, Jefferson county, Ala.

J. N. HAYES, Clerk.

R. H. BLAKE, Moderator.

#### CONSTITUTION.

1. The Association shall be composed of members chosen by the different Churches in our union, who, on presenting their letters, shall be entitled to seats. The members thus chosen and convened shall be known by the name of THE HARMONY BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, which shall have the right to enact and carry out Missionary purposes in all their bearings—yet, so as that the churches and individual members are left free; and that giving or withholding shall not be a bar to membership.

2. The Association shall usurp no authority over the churches in our union or infringe any of their internal rights; but shall merely be considered an advisory council in all matters relative to their internal concerns; nevertheless, it becomes necessary, in some cases, to have a uniform rule of procedure, namely: If one church commit an offence against another, it shall be the duty of the offended to labor with the offender for satisfaction; if she fail of success, she shall call the aid of two or more churches of our union to assist in laboring for satisfaction; and if final satisfaction, in the opinion of the helps thus called, be not obtained, the aggrieved may bring the case before the Association, which shall be taken up and decided upon according to its merits. If a serious difference should arise in an individual church, which, upon due labor, cannot be reconciled, she shall call the aid of two or more sister churches, to assist in the work, and if a reconciliation be not effected, the helps so called, or the church, may bring the matter before the Association, to be acted on according to its merits; but the Association will take cognizance of no case of the kind unless a due course of procedure shall have been previously pursued, according to the economy of the church discipline, found in the 18th chapter of the gospel of St. Matthew, and other parts of the Scriptures, which define the nature of offenses and the manner of bringing offenders to trial.



3. The churches in our union shall transmit to every annual session of the Association a written communication, giving the names of the delegates, their number in fellowship, baptized, received by letter, restored, dismissed, excommunicated, and deceased, which shall be read and minuted accordingly.

4. Every church in our union shall be entitled to representation in the following manner: Each church of fifty members or less 3 delegates, and one additional for each 25 members above 50, or fractional part thereof. Any church failing to represent herself as above prescribed, shall state her reasons at the next session.

5. New Churches may be admitted into our union by delegates bearing petitionary letters. If, upon due examination, they be found orderly and orthodox, the Moderator shall manifest their admission by giving the right hand in token of Christian fellowship.

6. The Association, when convened, shall be governed by a regular and proper decorum, which she is authorized to form and amend according to her own views.

7. At every session of the Association, a Moderator shall be appointed by and from the delegates present, whose duty it shall be to see that the rules are strictly observed, and to take the voice of the Association on all subjects legally introduced. A stated clerk shall be appointed, who shall continue in office until the Association shall elect his successor, and whose duty it shall be to take proper and correct minutes of the proceedings, and to keep a regular file of the printed minutes of every session of this body, which he is to present to the view of the Association annually.

8. The Association shall have power to exclude from the union any church that may violate the constitution or depart from the orthodox principles of constitution.

9. The Association shall furnish the minutes of every session to the churches making contributions for that purpose.

10. Every query sent by a particular church must be included in her letter, certifying that she endeavored to reconcile it, but failed. In such a case, the Association shall take it under consideration, and the voice of the majority shall be considered an advisory answer, which shall be entered on the minutes.

11. Queries which immediately concern the general union of the churches, sent by a particular church, or introduced by a proper motion, shall be taken up and decided on as soon as practicable.

12. Any church in our union having a preacher whom she deems worthy of ordination, shall call a presbytery of ministers from sister churches to officiate in the work; and all presbyteries, in the ordaining of ministers and deacons, or in the constitution of churches, shall be governed by the Abstract of Faith adopted by the Association.

13. The Association shall have a fund, supplied by the voluntary contributions of the churches, and all monies thus contributed shall be transmitted from the churches by their delegates, and paid over to the committee on finance. This committee shall be appointed annually, whose duty it shall be to receive in charge the Association Fund, and dispose of the same agreeably to order, and make at every session a fair and circumstantial report of their proceedings.

14. The Association shall not adjourn any session until she shall have finished all business on hand, except in extraordinary cases.

15. The minutes of the Association shall be read, and corrected if necessary, and signed by the Moderator and Clerk, before the session rises.

16. The Association shall in all cases be governed by a majority of the members, except to change or amend the constitution.

17. Amendments to the constitution may be made at any session when two-thirds of the delegates present are in favor of such amendment.

#### **ARTICLES OF FAITH.**

ARTICLE 1. We believe in only one true and living God, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost.

2. We believe that the Scriptures, comprising the Old and New Testament, are the Word of God, the only rule of faith and practice.

3. We believe in the doctrine of Election, and that God chose his people in Christ before the foundation of the world.

4. We believe in the doctrine of original sin.

5. We believe in man's incapacity, by his own free will and ability, to recover himself from the fallen state in which he is by nature.

6. We believe that sinners are justified in the sight of God by the imputed righteousness of Christ only.

7. We believe that God's elect shall be called, regenerated, and sanctified by the Holy Ghost.

8. We believe that the Saints shall be preserved in Grace, and never fall finally away.

9. We believe that Baptism and the Lord's Supper are Ordinances of Jesus Christ, and that true believers are the only subjects of Baptism, and that by Immersion is the only Apostolic mode.

10. We believe in the resurrection of the dead, and in the General Judgment, and that the felicity of the righteous and the punishment of the wicked will be eternal.

11. We believe that no minister has any right to administer the ordinances of the Church, but one who is regularly baptized, called of God, and comes under the imposition of the hands of Presbytery.

12. We believe that none but legally baptized members have a right to commune at the Lord's Table.

#### ***RULES OF DECORUM.***

ARTICLE I. The Association shall be opened and closed with prayer.

2. The Moderator shall be considered a judge of order, and shall have a discretionary right to call a member to order at any time.

3. A member not satisfied with his decision, may appeal to the Association on the same day, but at no other time.

4. But one member shall speak at a time, who shall rise to his feet, address the Moderator, and, on obtaining permission, proceed.

5. The Moderator, when addressed by a member for permission to speak, shall signify the same in naming the person, or otherwise.

6. No member shall be interrupted while speaking, unless he depart from the subject, or use words of personal reflection. Every motion made and seconded shall come under the consideration of the Association, unless withdrawn by him who made it.

7. Every case taken up by the Association shall be decided on or withdrawn before another shall be offered.

8. When a motion is taken up, after allowing time for the debates, the Moderator shall take the voice of the Association on the subject in such mode as he may determine.

9. The Moderator shall announce the decision of the body.

10. Any member wishing to retire shall obtain permission of the Moderator.

11. No member shall speak more than twice on the same proposition, without permission of the Association, nor more than once until every member wishing to speak shall have spoken; nor shall any proposition be made to close the subjects until the debates have been carried through.

12. The appellation of "Brother" shall be used in the Association by members in their address to one another.

13. The names of members shall be called as often as the Association may direct.

14. No member shall be tolerated in any practice which tends to interrupt public speaking.

15. The Moderator shall be entitled to the same privilege of speaking as any other member, provided he appoint another to his seat during the time, but he shall not vote on any question unless the Association be equally divided.

16. Any member violating these rules, shall be reprov'd by the Moderator, at his discretion, but only on the day the breach shall have been made.



